

Extract

Fellow-citizens, I have gone through all this detail of the various sectional issues, which have arisen between the North and the South, that you might understand your true position, and weigh well your future destiny. After twenty-seven years of steady and unscrupulous effort to obtain the rule over you—will the North surrender it when acquired? After the characteristics the Northern people have developed, in all their sectional contests with you, what hope can you have of any justice or safety under their domination? Selfishness, ambition, avarice, faithlessness, or fanaticism, have marked their contests with you; whilst on your part you have exhibited a generosity, confidence, disinterestedness, and a devotion to your compact of union with them, not without weakness. The truth is, the Northern people are not fit to live with any other people in the world. They have not the least conception of the principles of free government. Their idea of such a government is, that a majority shall rule a minority. If seven men formed a government, four has the absolute power over three. Of those wise and delicate restrictions against absolute power, whether in one man, or in many, by which the rights and liberties of all are secured, they know nothing and care nothing. No regard, therefore, to the great principles of free government will restrain the exercise of their brute power for your destruction. Nor have they for you, any of that respect, which is so near akin to fear. You have submitted so continually and habitually to their aggressions and oppressions, that they despise you. They believe, that they have only to order, and you will obey. They have only to threaten, and you will submit. You are a blustering, weak, timid people—demoralized and paralyzed by your institutions, just fit to serve, or to be tortured or destroyed. And their ignorance of the operations of the Union in their behalf, is as great as their ignorance of your characteristics. Their rapid advancement in wealth, prosperity and power, they attribute to their superior intelligence, civilization and worth. The countless millions they have wrung out of the South, by the operations of the tariff—the vast expenditures of the Government in their cities—the millions more they earn out of us, by carrying our cotton to all parts of the world—the mighty basis of their navigation, and of their commercial exchanges—their merchants and manufacturers may understand, but the people are utterly ignorant of these great causes of their prosperity. They say, as the rich man in the Scriptures: "My arm has gotten me this wealth." Swollen with insolence, and steeped in ignorance, selfishness and fanaticism, they will never understand their dependence on the South, until the Union is dissolved and they are left naked to their own resources. Then, and not until then, they will be able to appreciate the long forbearance and endurance of the South. Then, and not until then, they will realize what a blessing the Almighty conferred upon them, when he placed them in union with the South; and they will curse, in the bitterness of penitence and suffering, the dark day on which they compelled us to dissolve it with them. Upon a dissolution of the Union, their whole system of commerce and manufactures will be paralyzed or overthrown—their banks will suspend specie payments—their stocks and real estate will fall in price—and confusion and distress will pervade the North. Bread processions will walk the streets of their cities, and gaunt hunger will look terror into their palaces. In this state of things, those who have brought upon the people of the North these calamities will be called to a dire account. The anti-slavery party will be overthrown. A Union party will arise on their destruction; and we shall be bound to reconstruct a Union on new terms. They

Fellow-citizens, the dissolution of the Union will by no means be the completion of our deliverance. There will be great difficulty in limiting the members of our Southern Confederacy. Many of the free States will desire to join us. But there are three things which, as a humble citizen of the South, I would suggest ought sternly to be insisted on, in shaping its future destinies:—

First. The Southern Confederacy ought to be a slaveholding Confederacy. It is no experiment that free governments should exist in slaveholding countries. The Republics of Rome and Greece—still the light and glory of ancient times, were built on domestic slavery. But it is an experiment to maintain free government with universal suffrage, and the whole population to control the government. Population increases faster than capital, and no prosperity can long stave off the dire conflict which must arise between want and affluence—population and capital. When the great majority of the population have *no property*, which is the case with every nation in Europe, what shall protect property under the control of this majority, from partition or confiscation? What is liberty worth, with starvation; and what is property worth, with confiscation? Our Confederacy must be a slaveholding Confederacy. We have had enough of a Confederacy with dissimilar institutions.

The next point we should insist on is that the power of taxation should be limited. We know how this power has been abused by the present Confederacy. The North has wielded it for their enrichment and aggrandisement, at the expense of the South. The taxes should be just; and to be just, no man should be made to pay tribute to another, or be taxed for the benefit of another. No monopolies should exist; but all should be left to employ their industry in their own way, saving where the exigencies of the Government require revenue or restriction.

And the third condition which South Carolina should require is, that the forts and fortresses in our bay should never again be surrendered to any power on earth. We have seen the canon placed in them for our defence turned against us for our subjugation. When our flag again floats over them, let it remain there until our existence is blotted out as a free people.

With guarantees such as these, what shall prevent the people of the South from being a great and free people? With the bitter experience we have had, we can frame a constitution the best for securing justice and liberty the best the world has ever seen. With such a constitution and our institutions, we can establish a Confederacy which shall endure for ages; and our Confederacy will be as powerful as it will be great. All nations want our agricultural productions, and all nations will tender the friendships their necessities require. We will expand as our growth and civilization shall demand—over Mexico—over the isles of the sea—over the far off Southern tropics—until we shall establish a great Confederation of Republics—the greatest, freest and useful the world has ever seen.

My friends, the Union is dissolved. It has long since been dissolved in sympathy and spirit. It is now about to be dissolved, in form and fact. A few more weeks—a few more days—and by the fiat of South Carolina, it will be amongst the wrecks of past things, which, designed for noble ends, man's folly and wickedness have destroyed. Would that the finger of man's hand could come forth, and smite the plaster of the wall of our Southern palaces of the North with the word—*Mene, mene, tekel, u-lai*—and weigh in the balance the scales of justice—“God hath weighed and finished it”—and would that the hammer of God should burst the stones of our Southern homes—the stones of our Southern Union!

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